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FOOTBALL



Daniel Nkrumah wheels away in celebration after scoring a late winner against Braintree Town. Image: Jon Taffel

Last-gasp win thrills Wealdstone boss Cox

WEALDSTONE boss Sam Cox was thrilled for the returning Daniel Nkrumah after the substitute scored a late winner to secure a 1-0 win over Braintree Town in the National League.

Nkrumah, who has been sidelined since the beginning of September due to injury, came on to replace Micah Obiero in the 57th minute.

After a drab first half, the Stones piled the pressure on the Braintree goal and grabbed a deserved late winner after 83 minutes through Nkrumah, who slotted the ball through the legs of Iron goalkeeper Jack Thompson after some outstanding interplay in the build-up.

"It's a fantastic moment for him. What he's gone through in his rehab,

Sports Reporter

and he's come on the pitch, and he's made a difference. We asked him to come on and do that double press that Mics [Obiero] has done so well over the last couple of weeks and months," Cox told the club website.

"Micah Obiero has been fantastic, but we just needed that little bit of energy up front, and Dan certainly came on and did that.

"It was never going to be easy. It was always going to be tough, but again, we had to praise the boys' patience, as quite easily you can have so much of the ball and all of a sudden you hear a few groans in the crowd about trying

to stay forward quicker."

And Cox was keen to express his delight for how his side remained focussed on the task at hand before eventually grabbing a late winner.

The Stones boss said: "I do praise the patience. Sometimes, you have to wait for the right moments then to go and try to exploit [the opposition] off the back of that. We can't change our identity, but maybe just tweak some of the way we do things, which is what we did in the second half."

"We really praise the intent." Stones talisman Max Kretschmar was withdrawn due to injury shortly before half-time, and Cox provided an update on his new vice-captain.

"He's going to have to get a scan. It's unfortunate because he was excel-

lent on Tuesday against Yeovil, and then today, I thought he was excellent also," Cox revealed.

"But, unfortunately, he seems to have done his hamstring. We'll wait and see what the assessment is like and hopefully get a scan early next week and see where we go from there.

"Max is a massive part of this squad, and he's a leader in the dressing room, and that's why I made him vice-captain."

Some unsavoury scenes at the end of the match saw three players sent off for violent conduct, as Wealdstone's Deon Woodman and Braintree's Chay Cooper and Tommy Smith were all given their marching orders with seconds remaining of added time.

England ready for All Blacks

RUGBY



Saracen's Jamie George (obscured) scores a try

SARACEN'S Jamie George insists England will be well prepared and ready for their huge mouthwatering clash with New Zealand at Allianz Stadium, Twickenham this Saturday (November 15).

The Red Roses' grand unbeaten run extended to nine games after a strong second half saw them brush aside Fiji 38-18.

With Ellis Genge taking over the captaincy duties for this particular match from Sarries Maro Itoje, who came on in the second half along with fellow clubmate Jamie George while Ben Earl played the full 80 minutes, this was England's second straight victory in Quilter Nations Series. Both George and Itoje were involved in England's six try count alongside Luke Cowan-Dickie, Immanuel Feyi-Waboso, Henry Arundell and captain Genge while Northampton Saints fly-half Finn Smith kicked four conversions.

"I thought it was a perfect test for us," former England captain George told BBC Radio 5 Live.

"We can learn a lot from the way Fiji play and how they came alive with the ball.

"This team has come under a bit of criticism in tight games, certainly under my reign as captain. I think what we did really well was we had composure and clarity in the huddle where I thought Fin Smith led really well. When you're bringing on the likes of Tom Curry and Maro, that sort of experience in the huddle is invaluable.

"We've got a huge test next week and we're going to recover as there will be a few sore bodies from the level of physicality and be ready for the All Blacks next week."